

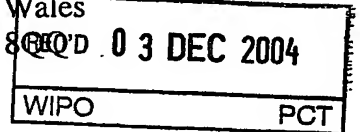


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1. Your Reference

DHC/SIS/Y2095

2. Application number

0324965.3

27OCT03 EB47409-1 002846
F01/7700 0.00-0324965.3

3. Full name, address and postcode
of the or each Applicant

Country/state of incorporation
(if applicable)

Tekgenuity Limited
The Campus Ventures Centre
Zochonis Building
University of Manchester
Oxford Road
Manchester
M13 9PL

8115826001

Incorporated in: England & Wales

4. Title of the invention

IMPROVEMENTS IN AND RELATING TO
PUMPS

5. Name of agent

APPLEYARD LEES

Address for service in the UK to
which all correspondence should
be sent

15 CLARE ROAD
HALIFAX
HX1 2HY

Patents ADP number

190001 ✓

6. Priority claimed to:

Country

Application number

Date of filing

7. Divisional status claimed from:

Number of parent application

Date of filing

8. Is a statement of inventorship and
of right to grant a patent required in
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YES

9. Enter the number of sheets for any of the following items you are filing with this form. Do not count copies of the same document

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Description 15

Claim(s)

Abstract

Drawing(s) 4 + 4 *Am.*

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Priority documents

Translation of priority documents

Statement of inventorship and right to grant a patent (PF 7/77)

Request for a preliminary examination and search (PF 9/77)

Request for substantive examination (PF 10/77)

Any other documents (please specify)

11.

We request the grant of a patent on the basis of this application.
Signature Date

APPLEYARD LEES

24 October 2003

Appleyard Lees

12. Contact

David Clark - 0161 835 9655

IMPROVEMENTS IN AND RELATING TO PUMPS

Field of the Invention

5 The present invention relates to pumps and to methods of operation of pumps.

Background to the Invention

10 Numerous mechanical devices for pumping liquids have been devised. However, mechanical pumping devices typically require moving parts to act on the liquid to be pumped. This may be undesirable in circumstances where manufacturing costs and reliability are primary concerns.

15

An alternative to mechanical pumping devices is disclosed in UK patent application GB 2322673. The pump of GB 2322673 includes an inlet and an outlet each having a non-return valve. Liquid is pumped between the inlet and the
20 outlet via a pump body that includes liquid to be pumped and an amount of gas. By cyclically heating and allowing cooling of the gas within the container the volume occupied by the gas cyclically increases and decreases producing a variable force on the liquid in the pump body.
25 As the gas is heated, liquid is pumped from the outlet through the non-return valve. On cooling liquid is drawn from the inlet through the non-return valve and into the pump body. The only moving parts required by the pump of GB 2322673 are the non-return valves.

30

However, the pump of GB 2322673 may not operate at high efficiency across a range of pump sizes. Furthermore, for

a given pump size it may be difficult to produce sufficient pumping pressure for some applications.

5 It is therefore an aim of preferred embodiments of the present invention to increase pumping efficiency and/or increase pumping pressure in a pump that is substantially free from moving parts.

Summary of the Invention

10 According to a first aspect of the invention there is provided a pump comprising: heating means, and a pump body comprising an inlet and an outlet, the pump arrangeable in use such that the pump body includes a volume of gas and a
15 volume of liquid, and such that heating of the volume of gas causes liquid to flow through one of the inlet and the outlet and cooling of the volume of gas causes liquid to flow through the other of the inlet and the outlet, wherein the heating means is arranged with the pump body
20 and the pump body is shaped such that heating of the volume of gas by the heating means promotes substantially non-divergent body movement of the volume of gas.

25 In this way the volume of gas can move efficiently and in bulk within the pump body to enable a cooler portion of the volume of gas to come into contact with the heating means, thereby promoting more effective heating of the volume of gas.

Suitably, the heating means is arranged at a lower part of the pump body.

5 Suitably, the pump body includes at least one baffle therein, the baffle defining a gas flow passageway between an inner wall of the pump body and the baffle. The gas flow passageway may comprise pipe work. Suitably, the gas flow passageway comprises an annular passageway.
10 Suitably, the gas flow passageway comprises a substantially circular annular passageway. Suitably, the gas flow passageway comprises a substantially "P" or "Q" shaped passageway.

15 According to a second aspect of the invention there is provided a pump comprising: heating means, cooling means and a pump body comprising an inlet and an outlet, the pump arrangeable in use such that the pump body includes a volume of gas and a volume of liquid arranged such that
20 heating of the volume of gas by the heating means causes liquid to flow through one of the inlet and the outlet, and cooling of the volume of gas by the cooling means causes liquid to flow through the other of the inlet and the outlet.

25 By including a cooling means to provide cooling in addition to cooling that may occur due to a difference between ambient temperature and the heated gas a greater temperature range can be achieved in the volume of gas.
30 The increase in temperature range can increase efficiency, speed of operation and pumping pressure.

Suitably, the cooling means is arranged within the pump body. Suitably, the cooling means is arranged at an upper portion of the pump body. Suitably, the cooling means comprises a thermoelectric cooling means.

5

The cooling means may comprise a heat sink including liquid. Suitably, the cooling means comprises a heat sink including liquid that is to be pumped by the pump and/or liquid that has been pumped by the pump.

10

According to a third aspect of the invention there is provided a pump comprising heating means, cooling means and a pump body comprising an inlet and an outlet, the pump arrangeable in use such that the pump body includes a volume of gas and a volume of liquid, and such that the heating means heats the volume of gas to cause liquid to flow through one of the inlet and the outlet, and the cooling means cools the volume of gas to cause liquid to flow through the other of the inlet and the outlet, the heating means and cooling means being arranged such that heating of the volume of gas by the heating means and cooling of the volume of gas by the cooling means promote substantially the same circulatory movement in the volume of gas.

25

It is to be understood that the cooling means provide cooling in addition to any cooling that occurs due to a difference between ambient temperature and the heated gas.

volume of gas can move efficiently within the pump body to enable a cooler portion of the volume of gas to come quickly into contact with the heating means on heating and enable a hotter portion of the volume of gas to come quickly into contact with the cooling means on cooling. This promotes more effective heat transfer to and from the volume of gas, leading to more efficient and faster pumping operation.

10 Suitably, the cooling means is arranged within the pump body. Suitably, the cooling means is arranged at an upper portion of the pump body. Suitably, the cooling means comprises thermoelectric cooling means. Suitably, the cooling means may comprise a heat sink including liquid. 15 Suitably, the cooling means comprise a heat sink including liquid that is to be pumped by the pump and/or liquid that has been pumped by the pump.

Suitably, the heating means is arranged at a lower part of the pump body. 20

Suitably, the heating means is arranged above and laterally offset from the cooling means. Suitably, the heating means is arranged above and laterally offset from the cooling means such that there is no overlap between them. 25

In one preferred embodiment, the pump body includes at least one baffle therein, the baffle defining a gas flow passageway between an inner wall of the pump body and the baffle. The gas flow passageway may comprise pipe work. 30 Suitably, the gas flow passageway comprises an annular passageway. Suitably, the gas flow passageway comprises a

substantially circular annular passageway. Suitably, the gas flow passageway comprises a substantially "P" or "Q" shaped passageway.

- 5 Suitably, the heating means and cooling means are arranged such that heating of the volume of gas by the heating means and cooling of the volume of gas by the cooling means promote substantially non-divergent body movement of the volume of gas. Suitably, the gas flow passageway
- 10 comprises a rising portion having the heating means arranged therein, and a falling portion having the cooling means arranged therein.

- In an alternative embodiment the pump body may define a
- 15 cavity, preferably an axially symmetric cavity, and more preferably a substantially cylindrical cavity. Suitably, the heating means and cooling means are arranged such that heating of the volume of gas by the heating means and cooling of the volume of gas by the cooling means promote
- 20 movement in the volume of gas in a pattern defining a substantially toroidal surface. Suitably, the heating means may comprise an annular heating element arranged within the pump body. Suitably, the cooling means may comprise an annular cooling element disposed above and
- 25 radially outward from the heating element. Alternatively, the cooling means may comprise a cooling element disposed above and radially inward from the heating element.

comprising the step of: (a) heating the volume of gas with the heating means to cause liquid to flow through one of the inlet and the outlet and to promote substantially non-divergent body movement of the volume of gas within the pump body.

According to the fifth aspect of the invention there is provided a method of operating a pump comprising heating means, cooling means and a pump body comprising an inlet and an outlet, the pump arrangeable in use such that the pump body includes a volume of gas and a volume of liquid, the method comprising the steps of: (a) heating the volume of gas with the heating means to cause liquid to flow through one of the inlet and outlet; and (b) cooling the volume of gas to cause liquid to flow through the other of the inlet and the outlet.

According to the sixth aspect of the invention there is provided a method of operating a pump comprising heating means, cooling means and a pump body comprising an inlet and an outlet, the pump arrangeable in use such that the pump body includes a volume of gas and a volume of liquid, the method comprising steps of: (a) heating the volume of gas with the heating means to cause liquid to flow through one of the inlet and outlet and promote a circulatory movement in the volume of gas; and (b) cooling the volume of gas with the cooling means to cause liquid to flow through the other of the inlet and the outlet and promote substantially the same circulatory movement as in step (a).

Brief Introduction to the Drawings

For a better understanding of the invention, and to show how embodiments of the same may be carried into effect,
5 reference will now be made, by way of example, to the accompanying diagrammatic drawings in which:

Figure 1 shows a side sectional view of a pump according to a first preferred embodiment of the present invention;

10 Figure 2 shows a plan view of the pump of Figure 1 about the section A-A of Figure 1;

Figure 3 shows a side sectional view of a pump according to a second preferred embodiment of the present invention;

Figure 4 shows a plan view of the pump of Figure 3 about the section A-A of Figure 3;

20 Figure 5 shows a side sectional view of a pump according to a third preferred embodiment of the present invention;

Figure 6 shows a side sectional view of a pump according to a fourth preferred embodiment of the present invention;
25 and

Figure 7 shows a side sectional view of a pump according to a fifth preferred embodiment of the present invention.

inlet 12, an outlet 14 heating means in the form of a heating element 11, and cooling means in the form of a cooling element 13. The inlet 12 and outlet 14 are coupled to non-return valves 16 arranged to allow liquid to be drawn through the inlet 12 and into the pump body 10 and to allow liquid to be drawn through the outlet 14 and from the pump body 10. The pump body contains therein a body of liquid 20 and a body of gas 22.

An increase in the temperature of the body of gas 22 causes expansion and an increase in pressure within the pump body 10. The gas 22 acts on the surface of the body of liquid 20, causing liquid to be pumped from the pump body 10 through the outlet 14. The temperature of the body of gas 22 can be increased by supplying electricity to the heating element 11.

A decrease in the temperature of the body of gas 22 causes contraction and a decrease in pressure within the pump body. The gas 22 acts on the surface of the body of liquid 20, causing liquid to be drawn into the pump body 10 through the inlet 12. The temperature of the body of gas 22 can be reduced by supplying electricity to the cooling element 13, which comprises a thermoelectric device that operates as a heat pump using the Peltier effect. The cooling element 13 is provided at an upper surface of the pump body 10 to allow cooled gas to fall away under gravity, to be replaced by relatively warmer gas to be cooled.

30

By cyclically controlling the flow of electricity to the heating and cooling elements 11,13 the temperature of the gas 22 can be controlled, allowing the pump 1 to deliver a

desired average flow rate of liquid 20. The inclusion of the cooling element 13 to provide cooling in addition to any cooling that may occur due to a difference between ambient temperature and the heated gas 22 allows a greater temperature range to be achieved in the volume of gas 22. The increase in temperature range can decrease the length of pumping cycles, thereby increasing speed of operation of the pump, or smoothing the output profile by allowing a greater number of shorter pumping cycles to be used to provide a desired flow rate. The increase in temperature range can also increase the pumping pressure possible for a particular pump body.

By including pressure and temperature sensors 15 into the pump body 10 a feedback control system can be envisaged to monitor and accurately control the average flow rate of liquid 20. Using feedback control can account for changes in ambient conditions that may affect the rate of heat loss from the pump body 10. Also, a pressure sensor can be arranged to detect an over pressure condition that is indicative of a blockage or partial blockage somewhere in the liquid path. Accurate control of the flow rate coupled with simple blockage detection is of particular importance in some applications, for example medical applications. Furthermore, in the event of a blockage occurring and then becoming freed the maximum amount of liquid that the pump 1 will deliver is the same as would be delivered in a normal pumping cycle.

Figure 3 shows a side sectional view of a pump 2 comprising a substantially cylindrical pump body 10 similar to that shown in Figures 1 and 2, with like reference numerals used to denote like elements. As the gas 22 within the pump body 10 is heated by the heating element 11 it tends to rise by convection, as shown by arrows 23. The rising gas 22 circulates out from the area above the heating element 11 and causes cooler gas 22 to descend in the region within the pump body 10 adjacent to the wall 18, as shown by arrows 24.

The temperature of the body of gas 22 can be reduced by supplying electricity to the cooling element 13, which comprises a thermoelectric device that operates as a heat pump using the Peltier effect. The cooling element 13 is provided at an upper surface of the pump body 10 to allow cooled gas to fall away under gravity, to be replaced by relatively warmer gas to be cooled. To enable the gas 22 to move in substantially the same circulatory movement on heating and cooling the cooling element is provided as a ring. The ring is of greater internal diameter than the diameter of the flat circular coil which makes up the heating element 11. In this way the heating means and cooling means promote movement in the volume of gas 22 in a pattern defining a substantially toroidal surface.

As the same circulatory movement is promoted by heating and cooling of the volume of gas 22, the volume of gas does not have to change its pattern of movement between heating and cooling portions of the pumping cycle. Therefore the volume of gas can move efficiently within the pump body to enable a cooler portion of the volume of gas to come quickly into contact with the heating means on

heating and enable a hotter portion of the volume of gas to come quickly into contact with the cooling means on cooling. This promotes more effective heat transfer to and from the volume of gas 22, leading to more efficient
 5 and faster pumping operation.

Figure 4 shows a plan view of the pump 2 of Figure 3 along section A-A in the direction of the section arrows. The arrows 23 appear as dots and the arrows 24 appear as
 10 crosses to illustrate the direction of gas circulation at the cross section.

Figure 5 shows a side sectional view of a pump 3 according to a third preferred embodiment of the present invention.
 15 The pump 3 is similar to those shown in Figures 3 and 4 in operation; however the pump body 10 is substantially spherical. The heating element 11 is arranged within a lower portion of the pump body 10 and comprises a substantially flat circular coil. The cooling element 13
 20 is arranged in a ring between substantially latitudinal lines toward an upper part of the pump body 10. As with the pump of Figure 3 and 4, the heating means and cooling means promote movement in the volume of gas 22 in a pattern defining a substantially toroidal surface.

25

Figure 6 shows a side sectional view of a pump 4 according to a fourth preferred embodiment of the present invention. The pump body 10 defines a closed annular gas flow
 30 section. The heating element 11 is arranged within a lower portion of the pump body 10 and comprises a substantially flat circular coil. The cooling element 13 is arranged in a ring between substantially latitudinal lines toward an upper part of the pump body 10. As with the pump of Figure 3 and 4, the heating means and cooling means promote movement in the volume of gas 22 in a pattern defining a substantially toroidal surface.

gas 22. The left part of the pump body 10 as shown comprises a rising portion and includes the heating element 13 at a lower portion. The right part of the pump body 10 as shown comprises a falling portion. As the gas 5 22 within the pump body 10 is heated by the heating element 11 it tends to rise by convection, as shown by arrows 23. The rising gas 22 circulates from the rising portion to the falling portion, where it falls as shown by arrows 24.

10 Figure 7 shows a side sectional view of a pump 5 according to a fifth preferred embodiment of the present invention. The pump body 10 defines a closed annular gas flow passageway made up of pipe sections of substantially 15 circular cross section. The gas flow passageway is arranged in "Q" shape. The heating element 11 is arranged such that heating of the volume of gas 22 promotes substantially non-divergent body movement of the volume of gas 22. The left part of the pump body 10 as shown 20 comprises a rising portion and includes the heating element 13 at a lower portion. The right part of the pump body 10 as shown comprises a falling portion. As the gas 22 within the pump body 10 is heated by the heating element 11 it tends to rise by convection, as shown by 25 arrows 23. The rising gas 22 circulates from the rising portion to the falling portion, where it falls as shown by arrows 24. The gas in the falling portion is cooled by the cooling element 13, and this promotes both body movement of the gas 22 and movement of the gas 22 in a 30 constant circulatory direction.

In any of the above embodiments comprising a cooling means, the cooling means may comprise a heat sink

including liquid. For example, a tube arranged to carry liquid therethrough may be provided in addition to or as an alternative to a thermoelectric cooling device. The liquid provided to the cooling means may have been cooled using a fluid based refrigeration cycle, or by other means. In a preferred embodiment the cooling means comprises a heat sink in contact with an external surface of the pump body and is arranged to receive liquid that has been pumped by the pump. This allows the liquid from the pump to be warmed prior to final delivery, which may be advantageous in certain applications, e.g. medical applications.

An improved pump has been described that offers advantages in terms of efficiency over similar existing pumps, without compromising in the simplicity of the pumping scheme.

Attention is directed to all papers and documents which are filed concurrently with or previous to this specification in connection with this application and which are open to public inspection with this specification, and the contents of all such papers and documents are incorporated herein by reference.

All of the features disclosed in this specification (including any accompanying claims, abstract and drawings) and/or all of the steps of any method or process disclosed herein, or any combination thereof, are intended to be within the scope of the invention, unless otherwise indicated.

Each feature disclosed in this specification (including any accompanying claims, abstract and drawings) may be replaced by alternative features serving the same, equivalent or similar purpose, unless expressly stated otherwise. Thus, unless expressly stated otherwise, each
5 feature disclosed is one example only of a generic series of equivalent or similar features.

The invention is not restricted to the details of the foregoing embodiment(s). The invention extends to any
10 novel one, or any novel combination, of the features disclosed in this specification (including any accompanying claims, abstract and drawings), or to any novel one, or any novel combination, of the steps of any method or process so disclosed.

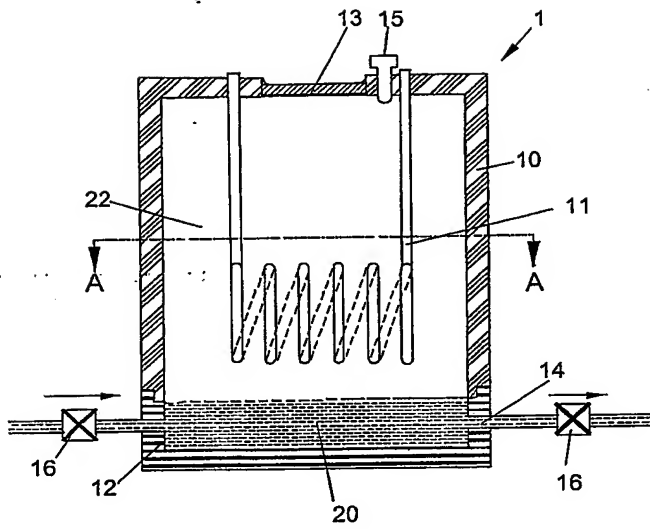


FIG. 1

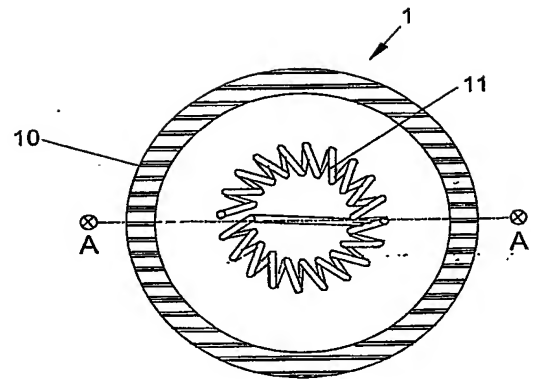


FIG. 2

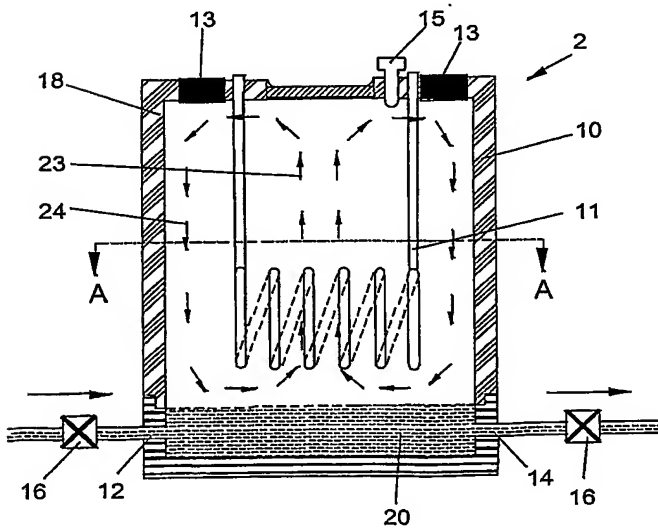


FIG. 3

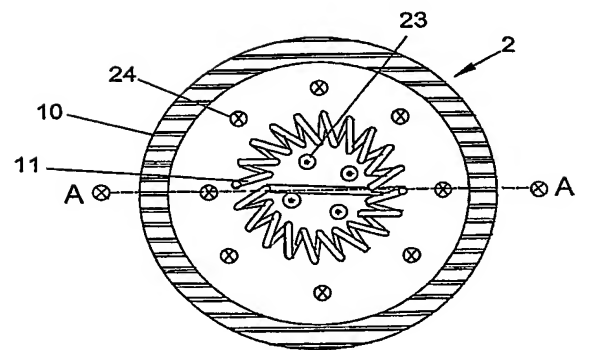


FIG. 4

2/4

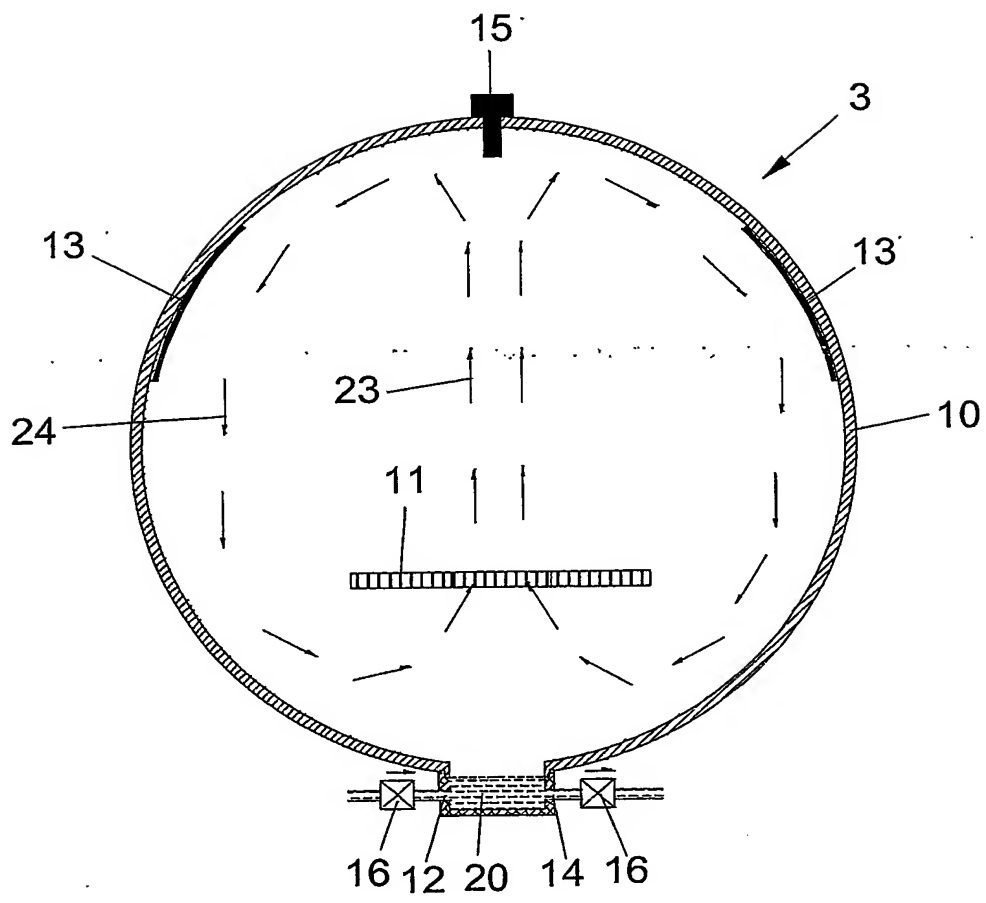


FIG. 5

3/4

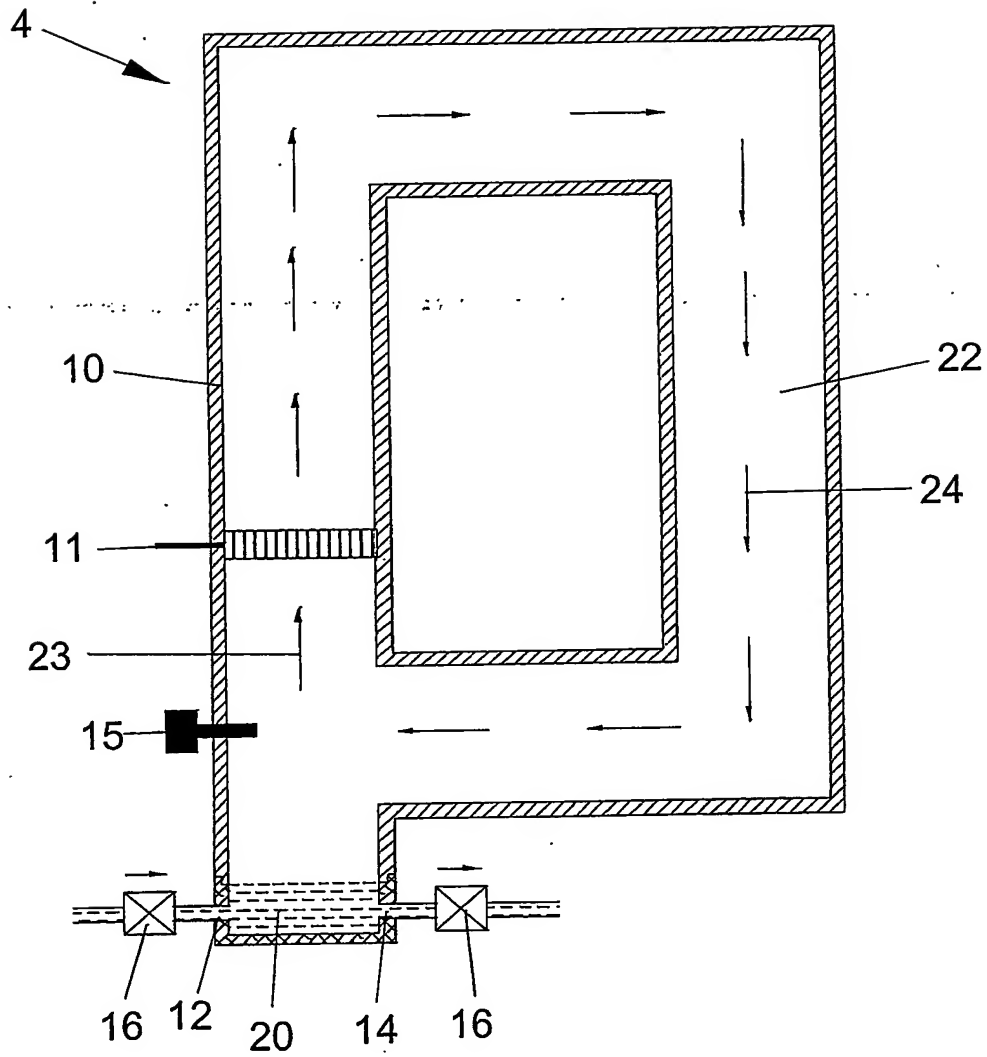


FIG. 6

4 / 4

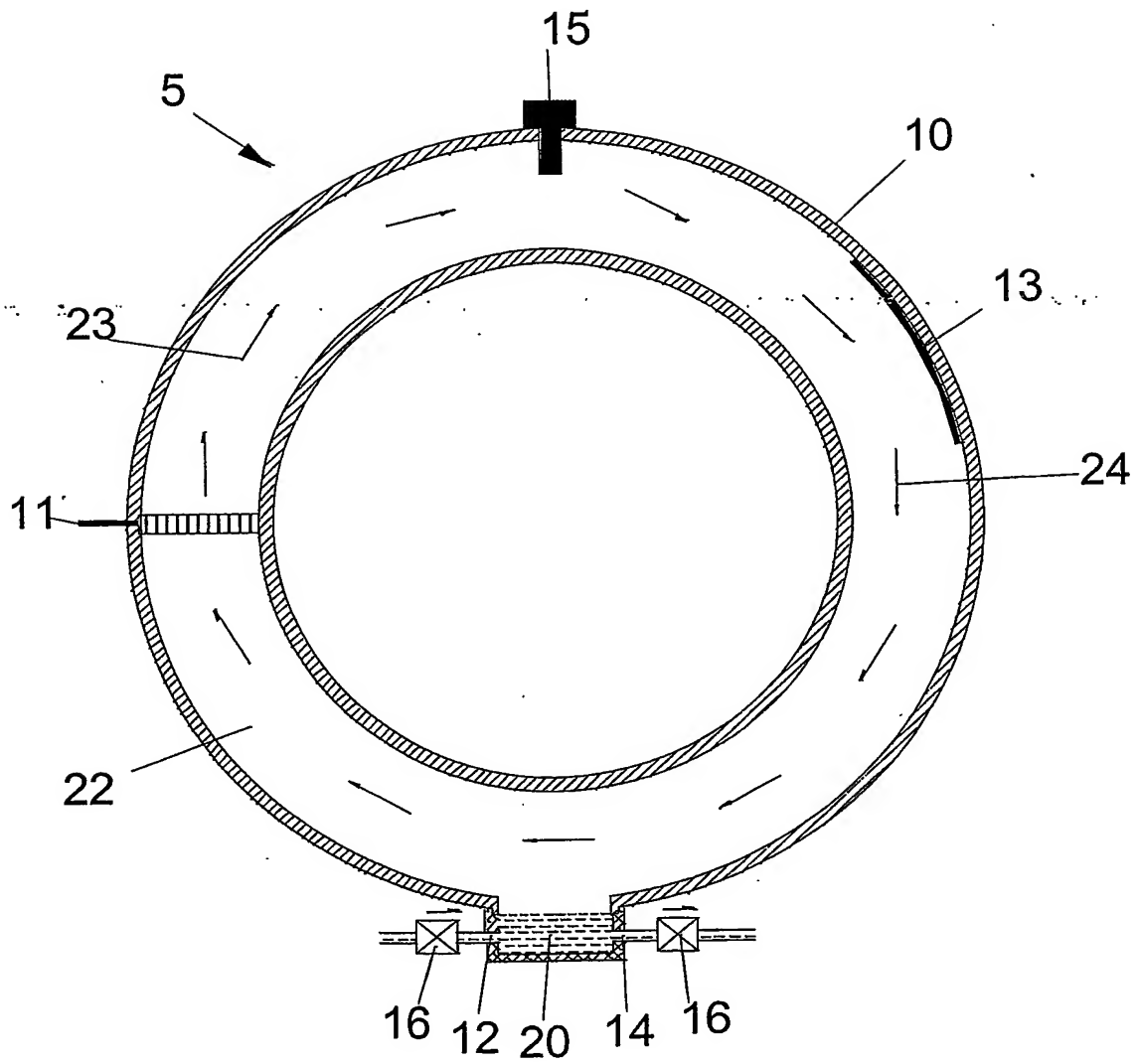


FIG. 7

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